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In Memory of Jerry Tebaldi

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In Memory of Jerry Tebaldi

Ryan Frabizio

When I saw your name
engraved in white upon a heavy green metallic rectangle
held a foot above ground by a dull gray pole
I stopped to mourn.
I stopped
beside an indecorous lush bush, pulsing in a washing breeze.

In the cool of the moment, I thought of knowing you.
Were you a woman or a man? I have known men named Jerry
and known women named Ryan,
and Ryan is rooted in kingship,
so no one knows who is who, or what, or why.
So rise, and let me know you and me.
Or must I come to you? I know you have the patience.
I have sometimes lost mine.
I have sat on unforgiving cold tile
on heavy nights, listening to Hell's Bells
bonging in my ears,
flowing in the cold flame-bursts.

Who the hell are you?

I understand. You are too much above me
or envy my current place above you.
We are not ready to talk as equals.
You are above throat noises.

If I think to myself in my language
since I know no other
will it better satisfy you?

Damn.

I know.
Begin empty-mouthed,
Follow mind-emptied,
but the tomb is a tomorrow, too short away
to shed this dull shell
on my own.
Jerry, we'll not talk again soon.